



## U.S. Customs and Border Protection

## Border Patrol Tactical Unit (BORTAC)

# FACT SHEET

The Border Patrol Tactical Unit provides an immediate response capability to emergency and high-risk incidents requiring specialized skills and tactics. BORTAC has a cadre of full-time team members headquartered in El Paso, Texas and non-full time members dispersed throughout the United States that can be called upon when needed.

The team is unique in that it conducts training and operations both within the United States and in other countries in furtherance of the Border Patrol's mission. BORTAC also trains and equips Sector Special Response Teams which provide Sector Chief Patrol Agents with the same specialized rapid-response capability within their respective areas of responsibility.

The unit was created in 1984 in response to rioting at legacy INS detention facilities. Originally created to fulfill this civil disturbance function, the unit quickly evolved and acquired additional skill sets in high-risk warrant service, intelligence/reconnaissance and surveillance, foreign internal defense training, airmobile operations, maritime operations, and precision marksman/observer.

BORTAC is unique in that it provides a global response capability. The unit has conducted training and operations with both foreign and domestic law enforcement



A patrol canine tracks an assault suspect while BORTAC the team prepares to apprehend the suspect.

and military entities throughout the United States and around the world, including in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom.

The BORTAC Operator Training Course was designed to mirror aspects of U.S. Special Operations Forces selection courses. The grueling BOTC, which may last over a month, begins with physical testing in push-ups, sit-ups, pull-ups, a 1.5 mile run and a pistol qualification. Those candidates who pass the initial testing must then complete a timed six-mile ruck march with a weighted pack and be tested in swimming, treading water, and drown-proofing.

After completing the entire testing phase, candidates undergo weeks of intense training in small unit tactics, operation planning, advanced weapon skills, defensive tactics, and airmobile operations. Before graduating and putting the BORTAC wings on their uniform, candidates must demonstrate the ability to function in a team environment under stress and sleep deprivation. Upon graduation, BOTC graduates may work alongside other operators on their Sector SRT, while learning advanced techniques in weapons and tactics. ❖



A BORTAC team member practices shooting target while subduing a combative suspect.